Research Authorship Grievance Procedure

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) This Procedure accompanies the Research Authorship Policy. It delineates the process for managing disagreements about the attribution of authorship.

Background

(2) Misunderstandings or miscommunications about authorship are common and it can be helpful to initially discuss any matters of concern with a Research Integrity Advisor (RIA).

(3) An objection relating to authorship attribution (inclusion or exclusion), or author order may arise prior to or after publication or distribution.

Scope

(4) This Procedure applies to:

a. anyone who conducts research or research support under the auspices of Macquarie University, in accordance with the Macquarie University Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research; and
b. all research outputs by researchers of Macquarie University, including but not limited to those that are published or distributed academically or publicly, such as books, monographs, journal articles, conference papers, creative works, web- based publications, professional blogs, reports or exhibitions, and may equally apply to other research records such as research proposals, grant applications and other peer reviewed research-associated documents.

Section 2 - Policy

(5) Refer to the Research Authorship Policy.

Section 3 - Procedures

(6) One of the following processes should be followed to address authorship grievances:

a. if an individual has an objection in relation to the authorship or author order of a research output not yet published or distributed, they should seek guidance from a Research Integrity Advisor (RIA). An RIA may assist to resolve the matter through direct dialogue with the other parties. If those involved are unable to settle a disagreement with the assistance of an RIA, the matter may be referred to the Director, Research Ethics and Integrity (DREI) for review as detailed (in clauses 8-10); or
b. if an individual has an objection in relation to the authorship of research which has already been published or distributed, they should outline their complaint in writing to the DREI who may progress the matter in accordance with the Macquarie University Research Code Complaints, Breaches and Investigation Procedure (per the Research Authorship Policy clause 28).

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(7) Disputes pertaining to the order of authors on a research output (in draft or published) are generally referred from the DREI to the Executive Dean of the relevant Faculty, or to another Executive (or their delegate) for resolution by mediation or other appropriate dispute resolution process.

Referral of authorship grievances for review

(8) Authorship grievances requiring review by the DREI should be sent to the DREI (copied to the Research Integrity Office) with a summary of the grievance, details of any RIA initially consulted and all relevant documentation.

(9) The following information must be provided:

a. Authorship declaration: A copy of the documentation or correspondence used for acknowledging authorship (can include email records, meeting notes, an Authorship Contribution Statement for Higher Degree Researchers or any other Authorship Agreement where one has been completed); and
b. Evidence of authorship and contribution: Copies of any documents showing how each author has met the criteria for authorship attribution, for example:
    i. the drafts and the final publication of the research output;
    ii. a list of all authors that are valid and the reasons why; or
    iii. a list of any other authors believed to have contributed to the publication and evidence supporting why they should be acknowledged.

(10) The process for review is as follows:

a. The DREI, will review the matter and determine whether it should be:
    i. resolved in accordance with recommendation(s) made by the DREI;
    ii. referred to an Executive Dean (or their delegate) for review and recommendation for resolution; or
    iii. assessed in accordance with the Macquarie University Research Code Complaints, Breaches and Investigation Procedure.
b. The DREI, or the Executive Dean, may make one or more of the following directions to parties to resolve the dispute:
    i. remove researchers deemed as failing to meet the authorship criteria and/or acknowledge their contributions, as appropriate;
    ii. include all researchers that are deemed as having met the authorship criteria;
    iii. revise the authorship order on the publication; or
    iv. any other direction deemed appropriate.
c. At the conclusion of the review, the co-authors and/or complainant will be advised of the outcome in writing.

Section 4 - Guidelines

(11) Nil

Section 5 - Definitions

(12) Definitions specific to this Procedure are contained in the Research Authorship Policy.

Status and Details

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